

**Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District
Advisory Committee**



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February 18, 2009

George Boggs
Whatcom Conservation District
6975 Hannegan Rd.
Lynden, WA 98264

Dear Mr. Boggs,

The Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District Citizen Advisory Committee is in full support of your EPA grant application titled "Reducing Runoff Potential from Manure Applied to Agricultural Fields and Dairy Operations Using a Progressive Application Risk Management (ARM) System."

Shellfish harvesting in Drayton Harbor continues to be impacted by high bacterial levels in marine waters during the winter season when pollutant runoff potential is the highest. Shellfish harvest is **Prohibited** in most of Drayton Harbor and **Conditionally Approved**, based on rainfall amount in a small area of the harbor. Recreational, tribal, and commercial shellfish harvesting opportunities are seriously undermined by this situation and time is of the essence to build on recent partnerships and successes that have helped to partly restore water quality in Drayton Harbor.

Ecology has just finished collecting water quality data for their TMDL. Most of the fresh water sites (32 of 36) exceed water quality standards for fecal coliform bacteria. The Puget Sound Restoration Fund convened several local and federal partners to conduct a microbial source tracking pilot study in Drayton Harbor and California Creek. This study confirmed widespread ruminant contamination of both fresh and marine waters in the study area.

This proposal would be a welcome addition to local efforts that are now underway to address livestock waste from small, non-commercial farms in Whatcom County. There is a clear need to insure that routine field applications of manure are not contributing to the degraded conditions that various sampling programs have documented.

Thank you for pursuing this grant opportunity. We view it as an important step towards the full recovery of water quality and shellfish harvesting opportunities in Drayton Harbor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink, appearing to read "Geoff Menzies". The signature is fluid and cursive, with a prominent loop at the end.

Geoff Menzies, Chairman